



MEMO



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What Makes a Good LEPC? **By Ed Jenkins, N.C. Emergency Management**

What makes a good local emergency planning committee (LEPC)? Is it the number of members? The number of exercises? Or, is it good hazard material planning?

To understand the LEPC program, it helps to first know a little background. The LEPC process got its start following countless tragic deaths from the 1986 hazardous chemical release in Bhopal, India. After that incident, the U. S. Congress passed the emergency planning and community right-to-know (EPCRA) federal law. It required states to establish state commissions, planning districts and local committees to better manage chemical hazards in their communities.

The law requires LEPC membership to have a wide variety of representatives. The groups should include state and local elected officials, as well as representatives from law enforcement, civil defense, emergency management, fire suppression, emergency medical services, healthcare, local environmental advocacy groups, transportation, media and the public. LEPCs also need to include those operators of facilities subject to the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act's Title III, which requires them to complete specific documents according to the type of chemicals stored onsite.

"During a hazmat event, representatives from these functions are typically impacted by the accident. Their work in the LEPC will be vital to any preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts for the community, so it is good to get these key stakeholders active in the program," said Patrick Lake, North Carolina's new EPCRA program manager. "Durham County's program is a solid example of a well-organized LEPC."

Durham County has significant hazmat challenges. In the county's 290 square miles, there are 121 hazardous chemical facilities containing some combination of 25 high hazard chemicals. There also are 365 healthcare facilities (including two major hospitals), large public service agencies and a major chemical industrial area in the Research Triangle Park.

It is one of the LEPC's responsibilities to ensure there is a comprehensive plan in place to respond to all emergencies that can occur within the county. These challenges are met by a highly motivated 50-member LEPC.

"I like the way our LEPC is made up. It includes companies and agencies across all spectrums. Everyone matters to the county's economic support or response," said David Marsee, Durham County emergency management coordinator and LEPC Chairman.



Durham County LEPC participate in a chemical response tabletop exercise in September 2009.

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EPCRA requires every LEPC to have a hazmat response plan. Typically, the LEPC's hazmat plan becomes an appendix for the county's emergency operations plan administered by the local emergency management office.

LEPCs must meet regularly to prepare, train and exercise for the next hazardous material incident.

State and local offices have a vested interest in forming partnerships. Locally, several counties may form a "Super LEPC" so resources can be shared more easily.

"A county's Emergency Management office provides the 'grout' that holds an LEPC together. Typically, this office has formed many relationships both in and around the county. When accidents happen, the EM office knows where and how to get help" said Ed Jenkins, NCEM's Deputy Plans Chief.

Hazmat and its transportation do not recognize political boundaries. As a result, there is a trend toward restructuring county LEPCs into "Super LEPCs". In North Carolina, 13 county LEPCs joined to form five regional LEPCs.

- Chowan and Perquimans Counties form the Chowan-Perquimans LEPC.
- Craven and Pamlico Counties form the Craven-Pamlico LEPC.
- Pasquotank and Camden Counties form the Pasquotank-Camden LEPC.
- Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties form the Toe River LEPC.
- Hyde, Martin, Tyrell, Washington Counties form the Roanoke-Albemarle-Pamlico (RAP) LEPC.

Ann Keyes, the Washington County Emergency Management Director and the RAP LEPC chairperson sees many benefits since merging the programs in 2000.

"Since the northeastern part of the state has a limited tax base and resources, it made sense to combine efforts. This biggest benefit I see is the activity of the program has increased tremendously. It made doing what we are required to do much easier," said Keyes.

Keyes added that joining programs really encouraged them to develop an all-hazards approach to emergency response planning.

The RAP LEPC will conduct an oil spill table-top exercise in late March to practice their LEPC's response plan.

The SERC has designated 82 LEPC programs as active. However, the vitality of these programs varies considerably. Lake is working to better understand the needs of LEPCs and will be launching an assistance program to help LEPCs meet the needs of their citizens. The assistance program in the design stage and more information will be released later this year.

Lake and Brian Barnes, the state's new risk management program manager, are available to speak about LEPC related topics and to help strengthen a county's current program. Recently, they gave a presentation at the spring 2011 All-Hazards Conference.

"Our goal is to have 100 percent of the state participating in a LEPC program. We want to help local EM in any way," said Barnes.

For more information about LEPCs, contact Patrick Lake at 919-733-3327 or plake@ncem.org or Brian Barnes at 919-715-8578 or bbarnes@ncem.org.



(L-R) EPCRA Program Manager Patrick Lake and Risk Management Program Manager Brian Barnes heads the state's LEPC Program.

NCEMA Spring Conference Review

The North Carolina Emergency Management Association held its spring 2011 All-Hazards Conference March 13-18 to provide emergency management personnel from across the state the ability to meet and discuss current issues, trends and concerns.

More than 300 individuals representing state, local and private agencies vested in emergency management attended more than 40 sessions on a wide variety of subject matter. Meeting topics included the restructuring of FEMA's nationwide emergency management training program; legal concerns for the new emergency management coordinator; national policy concerning the sheltering of people with disabilities during disasters; proactive partnerships between school systems and emergency management and an in-depth discussion on continuity of operations planning.

"Another reason that this year's conference was a success was the inclusion of presenters and topics from outside the normal emergency response community, including a focus on dealing with workplace violence; a look at emergency management through the eyes of two county managers; disaster planning from the perspective of the Chamber of Commerce; a look at ethics and conflicts of interest and the establishment of temporary flight restrictions over disaster locations," said Gary Jones, North Carolina Emergency Management Association Executive Director.

Eastern Branch Office Conducts Hurricane Exercise Meeting

On March 8, local and state emergency response agencies held a coordination meeting at the North Carolina Emergency Management Eastern Branch Office in preparation for the upcoming 2011 Hurricane Exercise. This exercise, known as the Eastern Branch HURREX, is scheduled for April 5 and 6.

The objective of the HURREX is for the eastern N.C. counties, volunteer organizations and state agencies to practice the operational procedures they would use in the event of a major hurricane.

"We hold the Eastern Branch HURREX each year to ensure everyone and every agency is on the same page when we have to respond to a hurricane for the upcoming season. This meeting also provides an excellent opportunity to discuss any changes in emergency response capabilities and how those changes impact other response efforts," said Mike Sprayberry, NCEM deputy director.

For more information concerning the 2011 Eastern Branch HURREX, contact the Eastern Branch Office at 252-520-4923.

NCEM Attend the National REP Conference

North Carolina Emergency Management's Information and Plans Section staff will attend the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Conference April 18 -21 in Orlando, FL. The conference provides a forum for individuals and agencies across the country that are involved in radiological emergency preparedness and response to discuss and learn the latest research and findings in the industry. Conference participants often include personnel from federal, state, and local government agencies, radiological health programs, nuclear power utilities, and other domestic and international organizations.

The emphasis for this year's conference program will be the number of training opportunities that can benefit state and local government organizations.

Workshop titles include: How to plan an ingestion pathway exercise; The virtual community reception centers; Emergency preparedness fundamentals; Nuclear Energy Institute update; a DHS project on how the unified incident command and decision support middleware enables information sharing among radiological and government responders; Responding to radiological attacks...Gaps in planning and training for first responders; and many others.

"This conference allows us keep up-to-date with changing policies and guidance in the REP industry. Especially with the conditions developing with the Japan reactors, the conference comes at the right time and the discussion should be good," said Corey Johnson, NCEM REP program planner.

For more information, visit www.nationalrep.org/.

State Emergency Response Commission to Meet

The North Carolina State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) will meet April 15 in Raleigh to discuss topics related to the homeland security program in North Carolina.

North Carolina Emergency Management's Assistant Director, Elaine Wathen, will update the Commission on various projects submitted by State Agencies and the Domestic Preparedness Regions (DPR). Final approval of homeland security projects cannot take place until a federal budget is approved by Congress and signed into law by President Obama.

Other presentations tentatively scheduled for the spring meeting include:

- New Emergency Operations Center update presented by NCEM Deputy Director Mike Sprayberry.
- DHS Cyber Security Program for North Carolina update presented by the University of Texas at San Antonio.
- UNC Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan Interim Report by Dr. Edd Hauser of UNC-Charlotte and Chris Crew of NCEM.
- Transportation Security Administration Operations in N.C. by John Greeson of U.S. TSA.
- N.C. Nuclear Preparedness by Grant Mills of N.C. Radiological Protection Service.

For more information, contact John Yarboro at 919-715-8000 ext 340 or jyarboro@ncem.org.

NC SERT Conduct Nuclear Power Plant Exercise; Post Japan

North Carolina State Emergency Response Team members will participate in the Harris Nuclear Power plant drill on April 26. Chatham, Harnett, Lee and Wake counties will be participating in this drill. Federally mandated and graded, this exercise is required every two years to test response procedures to protect life and property from radiation during an accidental release.

This will be the first nuclear power plant exercise conducted in the country since the earthquake and tsunami severely damaged several nuclear reactors in Japan. The Japanese events have led to increased public scrutiny of the nuclear power plant industry as well as how the United States' Nuclear Regulatory Commission ensures plants operate safely.

For more information, contact Steve Payne at 919-715-0170 or spayne@ncem.org.

NCEM's Recovery Section Closes out Hurricane Fran

The North Carolina Emergency Management Recovery Section officially closed out the recovery process for Hurricane Fran. Fran hit the coast of southeastern North Carolina Sept. 5, 1996, causing 37 deaths and damages valued at over \$5 billion.

In response to the destruction, NCEM and Federal Emergency Management Agency gave more than \$420 million in recovery grants to eligible victims and local governments along the coastal region. The recovery process for any disaster requires time as teams including disaster survivors, local, state, private and federal agencies work to evaluate and process each application. Hurricane Fran produced more than 15,000 public and individual assistance applications.

"For the past 14 years, our staff has worked tirelessly with our partnering agencies and the victims to close this storm out! I am extremely proud of everyone for their hard work and dedication to serving the people in the state affected by Fran," said Emily Young, Assistant Director of Recovery for NCEM.

For the remainder of 2011, the recovery section will work on bringing closure to 2000, 2002 and 2003 Winter Storms; Evans Road Fire and Hurricanes Floyd and Ophelia.

"The application process is time consuming because so many people and agencies are involved from beginning to end. A lot of back-n-forth takes place between the applicant, private insurance, county government, state government and federal government agencies," said Young. "One agency cannot begin their work without another agency first providing their information."

NCEMA Profile: Lifetime Member Patty Madry

By Rebecca Christenbury, Currituck County Emergency Management

For those who did not have the pleasure of meeting Patty Madry before she retired from Chowan County Emergency Management in 2009...you missed out. Patty's sweet demeanor and cheerful smile always made her a pleasure to spend time with.

Patty began her public service career as an Emergency Medical Technician in Chowan County, but jumped at the chance to enter into the field of Emergency Management.

David Humphrey, former NCEM Area One Coordinator, said she is a 'people person' who answered her calling as an EMT, and again in Emergency Management. She relished being able to assist people in various emergency operations, such as when tropical system Isabel hit Chowan County in 2003. When Chowan County citizens needed to be fed, she and the Emergency Services staff pitched in to ensure that no one was hungry.

One particular incident close to Patty's heart involved a tugboat crewman who went missing overboard in the Chowan River in January of 2005. Chowan and Bertie counties led a joint search operation over 11 days that eventually resulted in the recovery of the man's body from the river. Patty formed a special bond with the young man's family during the search, and has remained in touch with them since the incident

"Patty's role in communicating with the crewman's family was important and much appreciated by the family; this reflected well upon the entire operation, and was representative of Patty's caring approach," said Humphrey.

"I have known my friend Patty for more than 23 years and I have never met a person quite like her. Patty's sacrifice to her community is beyond reproach. Her commitment to her duties, family and fellowman is an example of supreme servitude. My friend Patty shines amongst the brightest stars," said close friend and Washington County EM Coordinator Ann Keyes.

Prior to her retirement, Patty accomplished EMT-I certification, Type I EM Certification, instructor certification for CPR, First aid, and CERT and CISM training.

After retiring from Chowan County, Patty traveled to Texas and began work as a contractor for Beck Disaster Recovery, Inc. She worked as a representative for the county working with FEMA to monitor documentation and reimbursements (i.e. project worksheets, assessment of damages to facilities and repairs made by the county). Most recently, Patty worked for our state in Craven County during the recent floods with FEMA representatives in Community Relations. Patty currently works part-time for the Chowan County Sheriff's Office searching for grant opportunities and providing clerical assistance.

Patty has a real love for volunteers and has taught a CERT class in Perquimans and Chowan counties since retiring.



Madry coordinates efforts in the search for a missing tugboat crewman in January 2005.



Patty says she has enjoyed retirement, but misses all the contacts she had with the EM family.

In her free time, Patty has been working hard remodeling her home, as well as a home she rents.

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"I NEED TO GO BACK TO WORK after all this," Patty said.

Patty is enjoying gardening and spending time with friends, and sings every chance she gets with the "Red Barn Gospel Group." Patty is also keeping busy with her adorable dog Charlie and her family, son Ronnie, daughter-in-law Amy, and grandson Shane and son Eddie, daughter-in-law Lisa, and grandson Aaron.



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Questions and Comments can be directed to:

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The North Carolina Division of Emergency Management was formed in 1977 to coordinate the preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation activities of all agencies for emergency management within North Carolina. It performs this mission by planning, organizing, staffing, equipping, training, testing and activating emergency

“In the Business of Saving Lives and Protecting Property”